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Traversal

The Examiner rejects claims 1-22 under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Chaussade '241 (U.S. Pat. No. 5,227,241) in view of Degeilh '971 (U.S. Pat. No. 4,696,971). The Examiner contends that '241 teaches a stiff sheet of PVB in combination with a soft plasticized sheet of PVB. The Examiner further believes that it is well known in the art to add DOS to PVB to improve "properties".

The Applicant respectfully disagrees. The Applicant contends that the Examiner has not met the initial burden of showing a prima facie case of obviousness. The Applicant requires the presence of a bleaching compound in the stiff PVB sheet of the present invention, while the references are silent in this regard.

The Examiner has stated that DOS is known to improve "properties" of PVB, and refers to column 2, lines 15-55. However, at column 2 '971 unambiguously refers to DOS as an emulsifier, and there is no reference to the use of a bleaching compound. The advantages cited by '971 for using DOS have nothing to do with any effect of DOS on the color of the PVB sheeting. In fact, there is no mention whatsoever in '971 of PVB color, or any correlation of color to the use of DOS. In '971 DOS is described as having an affect on the curing time of the PVB after the neutralization step.

The Examiner will also note that at Column 2, lines 24-27, of '971 the patentee states unequivocally that the DOS is "completely and inexpensively removed from the polymer" It is the fact of the complete removal of the surfactant that is credited with "superior adhesiveness" of the product to glass. There is no reason to believe that the DOS remains in the PVB after the washing step, and therefore no suggestion that DOS is,

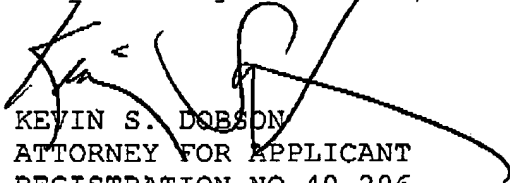
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or would be, useful as a bleaching compound. Thus, the reference teaches away from the presently claimed invention. The Applicants note that in those claims where the presently claimed invention requires the bleaching compound to be DOS, the teaching of '971 is contrary to the requirement of the presently claimed invention. It should be clear that if DOS is completely removed during the washing step, as taught in '971, it would be unavailable as a bleaching compound during the extrusion of the sheet.

The Applicant believes that the reasons provided hereinabove are sufficient to overcome the obviousness rejection based on the cited art references. The Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the rejection of Claims 1-22 in view of the arguments presented, and instead issue a Notice of Allowability for the same claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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